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FM AMEMBASSY ASTANA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7993
RUEHC/DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0946

UNCLAS ASTANA 000891

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/CEN - O'MARA
DOL/ILAB FOR TINA MCCARTER
DRL/IL FOR TU DANG

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ELAB](#) [EIND](#) [ETRD](#) [PHUM](#) [SOCI](#) [USAID](#) [KZ](#)

SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: UPDATE OF WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR
INFORMATION

REF: A) STATE 184972, B) 05 ALMATY 3112, C) 04 ALMATY 3206

¶1. (U) Summary: In accordance with Ref A, this telegram provides updated data on Kazakhstan's compliance with international norms on the prevention of the worst forms of child labor. This cable updates Refs B and C. This information is provided to assist in the determination of Kazakhstan's continued eligibility for benefits under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). Post concludes that the GOK is meeting its obligations under the relevant ILO Conventions to prevent and punish illegal child labor practices. There is currently no justification for altering Kazakhstan's eligibility for GSP on the basis of child labor issues. End summary.

¶2. (U) Note: The request for this information in Ref A makes no mention of the update provided by post in 2005. Post did provide a 2005 update (Ref B) to the information submitted in 2004 (Ref C). Since information has been submitted in the past two years, this telegram is intended to provide another update (per Ref A). End note.

¶3. (SBU) The Ministry of Education works in conjunction with local authorities to prevent absenteeism in schools. Schools closely monitor attendance and contact students absent for an extended period of time. Ministry of Education officials conduct limited "raids," together with the Interior Ministry and local authorities, on markets, private farms, and other places where school dropouts are likely to be employed.

¶4. (SBU) The problem of children missing school due to employment remains concentrated in the country's South, where tobacco and cotton farms attract, respectively, Kyrgyz and Uzbek migrants. These cross-border migrant laborers, the vast majority of whom are adults, are part of Kazakhstan's growing shadow economy. While local authorities do make schooling available to migrant children, the school drop-out problem exists and adds to the government's growing challenge of dealing with its expanding migrant population.

¶5. (SBU) In December 2005, a new statute was added to the Criminal Code criminalizing "recruitment for exploitation" and aimed at protecting minors from victimization in industries such as sex trade. The Ministry of the Interior works to identify at-risk children (such as runaways, abused children, and children involved in gangs) and, in some cases, places them in "temporary detention and rehabilitation centers." These centers, which provide classes and counseling, can serve as a stepping stone to a return home or a transfer to an orphanage. The Interior Ministry also works to transfer those exploited children who are foreign nationals to their countries of origin.

¶6. (SBU) Comment: Post is satisfied that the Government of Kazakhstan takes the issue of child labor seriously. While

Kazakhstan is facing some challenges in this respect due to a growing problem of illegal migrants, the government is making credible efforts to deal with the migrant situation in general and the child labor problem in particular. Post recommends against any change in Kazakhstan's GSP eligibility on the basis of child labor issues. End comment.

MILAS